Statement: Michael Wallin

Since my initial explorations in filmmaking in 1968, my primary concerns have been to use the medium as a means of self-expression where form becomes content and content partially dictates form. I see my work, in terms of other art forms, more as a corrolary to poetry and painting than to traditional narrative filmmaking or theatre. That is, the medium is not simply a vehicle to convey a story through actors and script, but is a fluid interaction between the aesthetic tools at my disposal (camera, sound, editing) and the ideas and feelings I wish to convey.

Through my earliest work (MENDOCINO, PHOEBE AND JAN) as an apprentice to the artist I still consider my primary influence--Bruce Baillie--through the "topological" trilogy (MONITORING THE UNSTABLE EARTH, FEARFUL SYMMETRY, ALONG THE WAY), up to my current explorations (the work-in-progress FURTHER CLUES TO A SELF-DISCOVERY), the same concerns have dominated. That is, the camera as an extension of my eye in its attempt to suggest new ways of seeing, whether what is being filmed are landscapes, cityscapes, people, and so on. Then, bringing the elements of an evocatively constructed soundtrack to suggest, enhance the various dimensions of what is being seen, but not to manipulate (emotionally, didactically, whatever). Finally, the editing as a creative element conjoining image to image in a way that challenges and questions rather than confirms any expectations on the part of the viewer. The entire process as a way to entice the viewer into being an active participant when experiencing the work, not a passive recipient of any sort of received experience.

The intent of my art is, in a sense, to subvert traditional Hollywood-style film. It allows for the possibility of the audience to experience both aesthetic pleasure in the imagery while having thoughts and feelings generated by the concepts or ideas framed by and emerging from the context of this imagery (and accompanying soundtrack). These concepts have ranged from personal documentaries to psychological explorations (SLEEPWALK) explorations of gay sexuality (THE PLACE BETWEEN OUR BODIES) to eastern spirituality (KALI'S REVUE) to the aforementioned topological explorations, the attempt to really acheive the feel of a certain kind of natural or urban space.

My most successful film, DECODINGS, might seem a departure from this philosophy, being a found footage or collage film. Yet I feel it is of a piece. While I have chosen older images rather than filmed them, the intent is still to communicate a sense of place, an openness, room for viewer participation, and, above all, real mystery, so that the new context created for these images challenges any conventional reading of them. My new film (FURTHER CLUES...) is a return to shooting my own footage and will continue similar, prior concerns, this time focussing on individual people (psychologically, emotionally, and sexually), and using the camera and the text to extract a sense of who they are (as themselves and in relationship to me). The intent again is to actively involve the viewer and to challenge expectation.

Biography----Michael Wallin

I was born in Palo Alto, California, on March 12, 1948, along with my twin brother David. I spent most of my early school years in Los Altos, a neighboring community, where my family moved when I was six years old. My first tentative filmic explorations came at age 10 and again at age 12, when, during brief vacation trips to Europe I was assigned the role of 8mm cinematographer, my father's hands being full with slide-taking. Even today I am complimented on the artistry evident in these crude beginnings.

My interest in the possibility of artistically-expressive, personal, and independently-produced film was stimulated in high school after being exposed to the films of Kenneth Anger, Jean Genet, and others. My first two years of college were spent at Yale, where I was introduced to the very best of independent and experimental film through a visiting filmmakers program curated by P. Adams Sitney. During the summer of 1968 I lived and worked in Mendocino, California. I was lucky enough to study filmmaking and be "apprenticed" to Bruce Baillie. My first two films (and a later restructuring, TALL GRASS) came out of the experience of this summer, in addition to doing camerawork for Baillie on his prize-winning film QUICK BILLY.

I finished college at the University of California/Berkeley (taking whatever film courses I could find), took a year off and made candles for a living, then went back to school at San Francisco State University in the graduate film program where I received an M.A. in Film in 1976. During this period I studied with several film artists, including James Broughton and Peter Kubelka. Subsequent to graduating, I worked at a number of different jobs, including doing printing and processing work at a local film lab (Image Works) and working as a freelance editor and cameraman for both commercial and independent clients. I also seriously pursued my own filmwork, and began to achieve a small degree of recognition with the first of what were to be numerous public screenings of my work.

From 1978 to 1986 I was Co-Manager of Canyon Cinema, the large independent film distribution company in San Francisco. Here I came into contact with virtually every important independent film artist in the country, a very stimulating period for me. Also, from 1980 to 1982, I taught filmmaking and film aesthetics part-time at California College of Arts & Crafts in Oakland (I had previously taught at Antioch College/West). I continued to be very active as a filmmaker during this time, completing six more films, screening my films all over the country (and in Canada and Europe) in one-person and group shows, and winning several awards at film festivals.

I owned and operated a negative cutting business--San Francisco Matching Service--from 1985 to 1989. My most recent film, DECODINGS, was completed in 1988. It has won numerous awards including the Grand Prize at the Black Maria Film Festival and a Special Jury Award at the San Francisco International Film Festival. It has been presented at film festivals all over the United States and in Europe. DECODINGS was selected for the 1989 Whitney Museum Biennial. Additionally, in 1988 I received the James D. Phelan Art Award in Filmmaking. In 1989 I received a regional National Endowment for the Arts grant (Western States Media Arts Fellowship). This will be used to help produce my next film, an examination/contemplation of the mechanisms of erotic desire and fantasy from my perspective as a gay male. The working title is FURTHER CLUES TO A SELF-DISCOVERY. In March of 1990 my film DECODINGS garnered a SECA (Society for the Encouragement of Contemporary Art) Award, given by the

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

Fleishhaker Foundation: Arts Application Form 2000

Michael Wallin: Budget for Film Project: HOUSE OF MIRRORS

MATERIALS/SUPPLIES (*) & SERVICES (**):

*4800 ft. color negative camera film: ($40.00 per 100 ft. roll)	$1920.00
**Developing: 4800 ft. @ .18/ft.:	864.00
**Workprint: 4800 ft. @ .29/ft.:	1392.00
*Magnetic Film (3 @ 1200 ft. roll):	114.00
**Sound Transfer: 3 hours @ $75/hr.:	225.00
**16mm Multi-channel Sound Mix (12 hrs. @ 150/hr.):	1800.00
**Video to Film Transfer (15 min. @ 100/min.):	1500.00
*Black Leader (1200 ft. @ 4.75/100 ft.)	57.00
**Answer Print: 1200 ft. @ 1.27/ft.:	1524.00
**Release Prints: 3 @ 600 ft. @ .67/ft.:	1206.00
Tax (8.5% on materials/supplies/release prints)	528.00
Total:	**$11,130.00**

[All prices current for Monaco Labs, Adolph Gasser, and Music Annex]

CREW/EQUIPMENT RENTAL BREAKDOWN:

Cameraman (2 days @ $500/day):	1000.00
Camera Assistant (2 days @ 350/day):	700.00
Camera Rental (2 days @ 650/day):	1300.00
Sound Recordist (2 days @350/day):	700.00
Sound Gear (2 days @ 200/day):	400.00
Gaffer: (2 days @ 350/day):	700.00
Lighting Equipment 2 days @ 300/day):	600.00
Total:	**$5400.00**
10% Contingency & Misc.	1653.00
Budget Total:	**$18,183.00**
Total Received (S.F. Arts Commission):	**9,000.00**
Balance Needed to Complete Film:	**$9,183.00**

AFI Grant Application
Independent Film & Videomaker Program

ITEMIZED BUDGET: FURTHER CLUES TO A SELF-DISCOVERY

Production Staff:

Cammeraman: $350/day, 8 days	2800			
Camera Assistant: $275/day, 8 days	2200			
Gaffer: $300/day, 8 days	2400			
Sound Recordist: $275/day, 8 days	2200			
Production Asst. (2): $50/day, 8 days (x2)				800

Talent:

Nic Pereira: $150/day, 4 days	600			
Eric Newton: $150/day, 4 days	600			
Extras (15): $100/day, 2 days (x15)			3000	
Narrator: $150/day, 1 day	150			

Scripts & Rights:

Narration Writer: $500/wk, 4 wks.	2000			
Music Rights: flat fee, approx.	2000			

Production Expenses:

Equipment Rental:				
Camera Package: $1400/4-day week (x2)			2800	
Sound Recording Package: $320/4-day week (x2)				640
Lighting Package: $800/4-day week (x2)			1600	
Film Stock: 8000 ft. color negative @ $100/400 ft.				2000
Sound Recording Tape: 10 rolls 1/4" tape @ $6/roll				60

Travel, Food, Lodging:

Location Meals: $100/day, 8 days	800			
Travel: Boston/San Francisco (RT)	500			

Post Production Expenses:

Processing: 8000 ft. @ .13/ft.	1040			
Workprint: 8000 ft. @ .21/ft.	1680			
Sound Transfer to Mag: 8 hrs. @ $50/hr.		400		
Edge No./Coding: 16,000 ft. @ .02/ft.		320		
Editor Salary: $500/wk, 12 weeks:	6000			
Editing: Flatbed Rental: 3 months @ $500/month				1500
Multi-Channel Sound Mix: 20 hrs. @ $200/hr.				4000
Negative Cutter: 30 min. @ $40/running minute				1200
Answer Print: 1100 ft. @ 1.20/ft.	1320			
Release Prints (3): 1100 ft. @ .60/ft. x 3				1980
Video Transfer: $250/hr., 2 hrs.		500		

Videotapes: 1" (4), VHS (12)	350
Subtotal:	47,440
Other: 10% Contingency	4,744
Total Budget:	$52,184

ITVS Phase II Application

Michael Wallin
22 Vicksburg Street
San Francisco, CA 94114-3325
Tel: 415-826-1426

3. PROJECT PROPOSAL

"FURTHER CLUES TO A SELF-DISCOVERY"

This film will examine issues of sexual fantasy, desire and obsession from my perspective as a gay male. A specific psycho-sexual mechanism will be the focus: the idealization of a fundamentally unavailable (or inappropriate) love object. The emotional ramifications of this syndrome (e.g., creation of a barrier to real intimacy) will be dealt with too, primarily becoming apparent in the interaction of text and image. Yet the film will not be (psycho)analytical or clinical. The images will be primarily of several men in my own life who have affected me (and continue to affect me) in this fashion. Foremost in this group is Nic, a dancer and "industrial" sculptor--a compelling figure for me. So that the creative act of shooting the film will partake of, will be fueled by, the psycho-sexual syndrome it examines. This examination will evolve in large measure through interaction with the accompanying spoken text, a collaboration with poet Steve Benson. The purpose of such a text is to comment on and broaden the way the images are perceived, to take the viewer out of the visceral experience of (voyeuristic) seeing into a more thoughtful (perhaps detached) realm. The control exerted by the sexual allure of the imagery will be tempered by what is heard--a poetic commentary using metaphor and parable to suggest paradoxical aspects of this very human foible, the pleasures derived and the costs exacted. What is seen and what is heard will interact in such a way that a single-minded "reading" of the film will be continually challenged. The filming of Nic and the other men will be more or less representational, using camera and editing strategies that I have developed in prior films. Some of it impromptu "documents" in their own environments, some of it more stylized renderings in controlled settings. The intent will be to convey through my eye/camera their essential appeal for me (moving beyond physical appearance to characteristic gestures, mannerisms, and so on) while never losing sight of their fundamental sexual expressiveness. The text will serve not only to give poetic voice to broaden the emotional and psychological ramifications of what is seen, but to suggest the often painful ironies and contradictions (and resultant loss) inherent in being seduced by the object of one's fantasy. So, point and counterpoint. Other elements to be explored: What is the role of projection (in the psychological sense, of course!)? What do we turn our sexual/emotional fantasies into that distorts ctheir reality and distances us from them? How do we protect ourselves from true intimacy by such a distancing maneuver? What is the relationship between our physical desire for this creature and the possibility for the emergence of a truly loving connection? Is the latter necessary to justify the former? Etc...

The film will be structured in sections, or vignettes. There will be four or five longer sections with Nic (including his performances with the High Risk Group), with short sections of the other men between these, acting as a sort of visual punctuation, or counterpoint. This strategy for the film's structure (cutting away to other men) will provide greater visual interest as well as suggesting a sort of composite fantasy. An important aspect of the footage will feature the High Risk Group, a nationally recognized and acclaimed men's

dance/performance troupe that have been featured at The Kitchen in NYC, Project Artaud and the Edge Festival in San Francisco, and the Cleveland Dance Festival. The group deals in an urgent, highly charged fashion (using movement and spoken word) with issues of social, political and sexual import in the age of AIDS. An additional element will be short monologues by the actor Eric Newton, a youthful veteran of the San Francisco theatre scene, performing in works at the Zephyr Theatre, New Performance Gallery, Theatre Rhinocerous, and Victoria Theatre (among others). He will portray characters who embody and address issues pertinent to the film's theme. One of his roles will be to suggest what it's like to be the object of desire, the "fantasized" as it were. Here the perspective will shift again, adding an additional dimension, or a different kind of counterpoint. My intent is for the film to be contructed as a tapestry, or mosaic, so that the use of performers--the High Risk Group and Eric Newton--will lend a greater sense of complexity to the work, as well as providing important subtexts to the main theme. The film is intended to operate on several levels--the socio-cultural/political as well as the personal/psychological. The intent is to show how these levels interact and influence one another.

This film will essentially address issues of a psychological and emotional nature involving desire and relationship between people. Yet the larger social and political context, and the nature of the times in which we live will be dealt with as well. With AIDS as a fact of life (and death), sex has once again become problematic, but in a different way than pre-Stonewall days. Casual sex has lost its allure while the romantic ideal of a monogamous lover is more appealing than ever. Yet this is not always a reality, so that in its place fantasy and obsession assume a more potent role. I want to explore this phenomenom in my new film, from a vantage point that is intensely personal yet reflective. I feel that it will be an important work for gay men as a tool for self-understanding, yet valuable for everyone, for we are all human.

I feel very strongly that my film FURTHER CLUES TO A SELF-DISCOVERY will begin to correct the unbalanced and stereotyped portrayal of gay men that has been available on television. In fact, there has been a virtual absence of representation of gay men by gay men in this medium. As well, there has been a paucity of truly experimental programming, which my film (along with others hopefully!) will also begin to correct. Historically, the argument that is floated is that audiences are not ready for this kind of programming, yet how do we know this unless it is presented? The exclusion and neglect of this kind of programming must end, so that the opportunity for seeing work both of an experimental nature and pertinent to the gay community can be provided. The gay community (both male and female) is desperate for programming that accurately reflects their identity and concerns as well as challenging preconceptions and providing a forum for ongoing dialogue. My goal in producing this film for broadcast on public television is to begin to address some of these misrepresentations and absences, and in this sense is precisely in tune with the ITVS mandate.